

# IPA executive pushes nuclear energy

By Jasen Lee Deseret Morning News  
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The Intermountain Power Agency has become a strong player in the energy business by efficiently operating coal-fired power plants, and one of its top executives would like to see Utah warm up to the idea of nuclear power.

Following IPA's annual meeting Tuesday at the Grand America Hotel in downtown Salt Lake City, IPA general manager Jim Hewlett said nuclear energy "has a future if it's not overregulated. It could come online and take up a lot of the slack and add to the reserve that we need to have."

Hewlett said that due to the high seismic activity around the existing IPA site in Millard County, there is little chance a nuclear plant would ever be developed there.

However, Hewlett said, the time has come for the nation to seriously look at nuclear power as a source of electricity generation.

"The existing nuclear in the country has been very safe, it's had a very good track record," he said. "A lot of the European countries use it as a mainstay for their (power) generation."

He said education about the attributes of nuclear power would go a long way toward instilling more public confidence in it as a primary energy source.

"Most of the issues with nuclear power are with the storage of waste," said Hewlett. "There are some potential solutions that will satisfy people."

Regarding the future development of IPA's current coal-powered facility, Hewlett is cautiously optimistic. However, he acknowledged that there may not be any additional power generation at the facility for some time until improved clean-burning technology is developed.

Last month, the Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems filed a lawsuit against the Los Angeles Department of Water & Power and the Intermountain Power Agency due to their refusal to support construction of a third coal power unit of the Intermountain Power Project generating station. The plant's two existing IPA units are located about 15 miles northeast of Delta in Millard County.

In 2006, California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger signed a bill that set a statewide framework for reducing that state's greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent by 2020.

The Los Angeles agency is the largest owner of the two existing units in Utah and is entitled to 44.6 percent of the power generated by the facility. The plant delivers electricity to the California cities of Anaheim, Burbank, Glendale, Pasadena and Riverside, with 74.9 percent of the plant's power earmarked for the Golden State.

Approximately 14 percent of the plants' power goes to Utah cities, including Beaver, Fillmore and Price, among others. Utah electrical cooperatives are entitled to just over 7 percent, with PacifiCorp getting 4 percent.

Other business at the annual meeting included the election of two new members along with the re-election of a third to IPA's seven-member board of directors. Ed Collins will serve out a shortened term through 2009 for a retiring board member, while Robert Christiansen will serve a full four-year term through 2011. In addition, Russ Fjeldstad was re-elected to serve another four-year term, also through 2011. E-mail: [jlee@desnews.com](mailto:jlee@desnews.com)

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